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262 is customary with us, she is only likely to succeed if she cooks more or less the same amount of porridge each day, however large the number of eaters. In fact, this is what she does. Moreover the Bemba woman does not appear to calculate her supplies, consciously at any rate, on the basis of a fixed amount of food per person per day, nor has she ever fed people out of separate vessels, so that it is unlikely that she has a visual image of an average or suitable portion of food for each eater as has the English woman accustomed to taking a similar-sized helping on to her plate at each meal.

The Bemba usually take out of their granaries one of the ordinary eating-baskets of unthreshed millet (about 5 lb.) or for a big household a winnowing basket (about 10 lb.). In very exceptional circumstances they will take two. The Englishwoman rings up her husband to ask him anxiously if he is bringing home two extra guests to supper or three; the African woman will make the distinction more roughly between a 'great many' people or a 'few'. Unaccustomed from youth to expect regular and similar meals each day, she treats the appearance of visitors with less concern.

The effect of the Bemba methods of distribution on the tribal dietary have been shown to be pronounced. It may therefore be asked whether the introduction of a European system of housekeeping is likely to produce great changes in this respect. There is a widespread idea among white people that the adoption of the individual household would be a great forward step for the African. It is even considered to be a moral advantage to the native to be encouraged to acquire a feeling of sole responsibility for his wife and his own offspring. The European way of life seems to us to promise a race of thrifty, enterprising, hard-working natives, while their own condemns them to remain in their primitive state. From an ethical point of view there is in fact little to choose between the two economic systems. The older Bemba accepts far wider responsibilities for his kinsmen than his counterpart in this country, while the younger one undoubtedly does not. But in actual fact a number of Bemba near European towns are already living an individual family life, and therefore apart from the moral value of the one system as against the other, the changes in their whole nutritional situation are important to describe.

262 In such modern villages there are two factors to be considered.
184 One of these factors is the isolation of native families and the other

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the gradual adoption of the use of money for the purchase of food. Both make for inequality in the standards of living as between household and household, which are not found in any rural village. Where a housewife lives alone with one or two married daughters instead of being a member of a closely-knit kinship group under one headman, she has less obligation to share. Where she buys her supplies with money, at any rate for part of the year, she considers herself free of all the tribal rules of division. Thus, in Kungu village near Kasama, I have seen a young couple eat meat alone while almost starving neighbours looked on. They shrugged their shoulders when questioned, and said, 'We bought this meat with money.' I have also seen beer drunk by men alone with no guests invited, even though the act was disapproved of. The effect of such new customs on the diets of different families is shown in the records I collected. Thus, in this area, one family spent 7*s*. 6*d*. a week on food, and their diet included 17½ lb. of meat, 2 lb. of tripe, and beer; another family spent 3*s*. 6*d*. a week on food, eating caterpillars, chicken, fish, and 4 lb. of meat; while a third household spent nothing on food and only managed to procure pumpkin, green leaf relish, and 1 lb. of meat during the week. In another village one woman had an average of 3 lb. of flour a day in the hunger season, and bought 2 lb. of butcher meat, while next door an old woman supporting a granddaughter lived for six days on gourds, some picked long before they had reached full size, while another ground up her seed millet into flour.

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This inequality as between family and family much more nearly resembles conditions in our own society, and appears to be the necessary result of the adoption of a money economy. At present there is of course the added difficulty that individual housekeeping has begun to exist without any previous organization of trade, specialization of urban and agricultural workers, or regular possibilities of buying food. Thus the families in these communities are at present in an intermediate position—they do not have to share their supplies as do their fellows in the bush, yet they are much worse off during the hunger months, since they cannot rely on their kinsmen for support. Although it appears that most Africans must ultimately adopt the European system of economy, the encouragement of the single family household, before a system of trade has been established, might well lead to disaster.

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437 forging of iron axe-blades or spear-heads—exchange their articles for goods, service, or money. But I never met a man who traded regularly in this fashion, who lived on the proceeds of his industry, or who travelled about the country selling his wares. In fact, the greatest initiative I ever noted was shown by one of Citimukulu's old hereditary priests, who sold baskets to villagers for chickens, and then sold the latter, ten or twelve at a time, to Europeans.

439 Trade with Europeans consists for the main part of sales of grain to the Government stations or missions. In 1934 the price varied from ½*d.* a lb. during harvest months to 1½*d.* during the rainy season [435] in the Chinsali area. The Government station at Mpika also bought £140 of salt at 1*d.* a lb. But it is difficult to estimate the total amount of food sold over the whole area.

437 To conclude, it can be said that the Bemba, owing to their particular environment and social organization, reckon to live by means of mutual support within their kinship groups, and only resort to the barter or sale of the goods they need sporadically, or on occasions of necessity. Then either temperament or their patterns of economic thought make them extraordinarily inept, according to European standards. Marketing, like any other form of economic activity, is evidently based on a system of values developed in earliest youth, and the trading instinct seems to be difficult to acquire by a people who have not been through such a training. 437 The contrast between Bemba children and those of the Bisa of the fishing villages in the Bangweolu swamps is striking. There the 184 children are accustomed from earliest infancy to hear the sales of fish and other commodities discussed, and I found that they themselves continually talked of the values of different objects, and even of their own services. When I asked them to do something for me they replied automatically, 'How much will you give me? Yes, but what kind of beads and how many?' Having struck their bargain, they kept to it. The Bemba children, on the other hand, accepted such requests for help by politely clapping their hands, as to a chief. They never bargained or refused, but on the other hand they considered their services made me liable to help them and feed them, and they were constantly on the look-out for their dues. They left the work if they became convinced, for some reason or other, that I did not 'like' them. In Bemba society economic transactions are based on a system of personal relationships—ties

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of kinship or political status—and in the Bisa country on an organized system of commercial exchange superimposed on these social ties. These and many other incidents made me think that the introduction of marketing in the Bemba area would be a slow process liable to many set-backs, however essential it be to their progress at the present time.

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is functioning inefficiently at the present time (cf. p. 264) it is the only means by which the political machinery of the tribe continues to exist.

Tribute as Rent.

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It will be asked at once how far this tribute in labour and kind can be classed as rent? If by this term we mean a fixed amount of work or goods given in return for the right to use a fixed amount of land, then obviously the dues of the Bemba chief cannot be so described. They are part of a series of mutual obligations observed between subject and chief, of which the right to land is one of the gains to the commoner, and the right to service just one of a series of chiefly prerogatives. To make the situation clearer we should list the advantages both parties gained by the arrangement. Why did the commoner work for the chief? Partly because he was afraid of his power and partly because there were positive inducements to do so. We saw that a commoner who made a garden in the chief's *icalo* without permission was liable to have his crops seized in the old days. Some natives now say that refusal to work *umulasa* or *ukutula* would have meant mutilation in pre-European times: others argue, 'No. Since it would be stupid to cut off the hand of a man who would then be unable to work *umulasa* for his chief again.' One man told me that with the first default a man would have been scolded, and at the second his chickens and granary would have been seized. But in actual fact no old man I talked to could remember an actual instance of a man refusing to pay his dues, and I think such occasions were probably limited to open acts of defiance on the part of powerful young members of the royal clan trying to set up power on their own. Of commoners I constantly got the answer, *Ukuti bakana shyani?*, 'And why should they refuse?', with genuine surprise in the tone. The fact that the Bemba believed that their gardens were unlikely to yield without the chief's blessing has been stressed again and again in these pages. While some natives deny that the *imipashi* would refuse their beneficence to men who refused to work for their chief or give tribute, others assert equally emphatically that this is so, and all are convinced that it is definitely unlucky to offend him. To say of a chief, a white man, or any one in high authority that he is angry (*ukufulwa*) is a serious thing, even at the present day. Small lapses are not expected to be followed automatically by

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423 Once a tree in the bush has been blazed, a man has absolutely secure possession over the strip of ground marked. He will arrange the branches he cuts on the ground with their stems all pointing in one direction. The owner of the next *icitemene* will lay his branches in the opposite direction, so that there can be no chance of dispute as to the ownership of the wood cut. Even if he has to leave the territory before completing his *icitemene*, the half-cleared site remains his property to leave or dispose of to his relatives as he pleases. When he has reaped the first year's millet and the garden becomes a *icifwani* ('old garden') the same rights hold good. A man may leave his *icifwani* fallow for two or three years without any one disputing his claim to its use, and even if he is absent some years in the mines, there is no question of any outsider trying to dig up the garden and sow it as long as any of his relatives remain in the district and show any inclination to use it. I think land would have to be exceedingly short before a Bemba would risk a quarrel on this account, so deep is this belief in the rights of occupation conferred by clearing the bush.

The rules governing the ownership of the village gardens are more precise, and it is interesting to find that the Bemba conceptions of land tenure are sufficiently elastic to allow the development of a perfectly definite system of undivided rights of use when there is any shortage of ground.[1] Every one wants some *mputa* near the village so that he can grow beans and maize near to his hut,

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[1] Mrs. Gore-Browne collected material in 1933 to show that the Bisa inhabiting Cilubi Island in L. Bangweolu have adapted their system of tenure to conditions of land shortage. At Matipa, the village of the Paramount Chief, the most fertile ground for cultivation was that of deserted village sites, the huts of the new village being built 500 yards or so from the old. The chief had full rights over these old sites (*ifibolya*) and could cultivate them or allocate them to his followers, but once allotted he could never take a garden back while living relatives of the owner wished to use it. Thus the cultivated ground round Matipa's village contained (*a*) gardens of the present chief made on his own *icibolya* and to be left to his heirs, (*b*) gardens allotted by him to his councillors, (*c*) gardens allotted by the previous *Matipa* and inherited by their heirs.

At Nsamba's village, a neighbouring Unga chief, the *mfumu* also allocated village land and similarly at the capital of Kasomo, an Ushi chief. Forest gardens were inherited in the matrilineal line (i.e. by a man's maternal nephew) and have been in use for some twenty or thirty years in this way. They only revert to the chief when no member of the original family claims them. This is an interesting example of a combination of individual, inherited rights over land with a recognition of the chief's powers to allocate. It is not, I think, a system specially characteristic of the Bisa, as distinct from the Bemba, but an adaptation to unusual environmental conditions.

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Bisa

effects. All these reasons prevent the agricultural knowledge of some of the older Bemba from being used with the best results. Some signs of the adoption of a more fixed habitation are seen in the villages round Kasama, where the people have shown considerable shrewdness in the use of their old village sites as a means of prolonging the fertility of the ground, and here modern economic conditions seem to have resulted in the appearance of the specialist gardener, who does better than his fellows in the bush, side by side with a mass of inefficient and indifferent cultivators.

The Adoption of Fixed Cultivation in Special Environments

An interesting example of the adoption of fixed cultivation in response to special environmental conditions was noted by Mrs. Gore-Browne among the Bisa on Cilubi Island, Lake Bangweolu, in November 1933. Here shortage of land on a small, rather densely populated island, and shortage of trees for the making of burnt gardens had caused a revolution in agricultural methods during a period of 15–30 years. Forest gardens were now cultivated continuously with a year's fallow every fifth year instead of the former shifting cultivation, and the staple crop had been changed. These people formerly grew millet after the Bemba fashion in burnt gardens and planted cassava with it. The history of particular gardens during the last sixteen years showed that cultivators had been able to use their land nine years running in the first instance, sowing millet with the cassava the first two years, then planting a succession of fresh cassava cuttings for three, redigging completely, and repeating the same sequence of cassava and millet in the subsequent four years. The ground was then left fallow for two years and by this time—the twelfth year of occupation—all attempts to grow millet were apparently abandoned and the people adopted a regular sequence of planting cassava, setting cuttings for three years running and following it with a ground-nut crop for the fourth year. After this they allowed the ground to lie fallow for a year, and then restarted the same four-year sequence.

In this way, the particular gardens visited had been kept in more or less continuous cultivation for a period of sixteen years. Under these conditions the Bisa have had to give up the use of millet as a staple crop entirely. They live upon cassava with a great deal of fish from the lake and a few supplementary foods such as ground-beans and peas grown on a small scale in special gardens made in the alluvial soil near river banks. They only plant millet for beer, and that on a neighbouring island with rich soil, and travel there by canoe two or three times a year

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to sow or harvest their crops, giving tribute to the local chief for the right to use the land. For the rest, as the first step in fixed cultivation in poor soil without manure, they make extensive use of deserted village sites as do the Bemba, and other local systems prescribe carefully the method of use of this valuable ground.

This instance shows that the native is perfectly capable of adopting some sort of fixed cultivation when environmental conditions compel him to do so. I do not know whether such an adaptation would occur among the Bemba with their far greater reliance on millet for their diet and their traditional interest in the crop, but I saw a case of conscious adoption of the Bisa practice by a Bemba village living near their border on a treeless plain on the banks of the Luansenshi River—1933, a year of locust raids. Here, the headman told me, the villagers had decided by common consent to give up their *ifitemene* for the first time in their lives "because we have used up all the trees and we said "Well! then let us turn into Bisa now"', *i.e.* live on cassava. Such instances of the purposive adaptation of the customs of a neighbouring tribe, by a people living on their border, show that the hand of custom is not as heavy on the African as is sometimes imagined.

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CHAPTER XVI

FISHING AND HUNTING

FISHING and hunting will be discussed only cursorily in these pages. It is, however, necessary just to touch on these activities in order to be able to complete the economic calendar of work.

Fishing Methods.

The Bemba cannot be described as a fishing tribe. As a food, fish makes one of their favourite relishes, and is reckoned nearly as great a treat as meat. They catch fish whenever they can, and very much appreciate dried fish, but such food is regarded rather as a sudden piece of luck than as a regular article of diet, and fishing itself in a greater part of the country is an amusing pursuit, particularly when undertaken communally, rather than a serious means of getting one's livelihood. Among the neighbouring Bisa, a fishing tribe living on Lake Bangweolu, each fish is known by name and referred to as such, and every child in the community is able to pick out the different sorts correctly from a heap. But among the Bemba, though different types are recognised by the older men, the rest of the natives just speak of 'fish'. The Bisa regularly dry fish and trade it over the country. They have a fixed system of prices and reckon each catch carefully in terms of financial profit. The Bemba, on the other hand, only sell fish occasionally, at certain seasons of the year, and then by a process of casual barter. Apart from those who live by the banks of big rivers they are indifferent boatmen and handle clumsily the paddles of the dug-out canoes at river fords. Along the Chambesi, Luansenshi, and other big rivers there are, however, definite fishing villages recognized by the natives as such. These villages remain fixed in one position year in year out. Here we find fishing by one method or another going on all the year round, a complex system of ownership of weirs and rights of use of ponds, and special fishing ceremonies such as are not found over the rest of the plateau. The inhabitants of these villages are definitely specialist fishermen, distinguished by name as *amalonga* (plur. *abalonga*) and considered very exclusive and even dour by the rest of the Bemba. The latter discuss the habits of these fishermen as though they were almost a

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226 *Mamba* are used (*a*) in backwaters of big rivers (*ifishiba*) in
227 March; (*b*) on the flats about 400 feet from the river edge as the waters fall in April and May; (*c*) in the same dikes, with the traps reversed to catch the fish as they leave the main stream to breed in January, if the rain is not so heavy that it sweeps them away at once (*ukucilule mbelo*); (*d*) in the main body of the stream (*umulongo*) in May, in small rivers only.

Large numbers of fish are only caught by the trap method near the big rivers, but a sufficient number of small fish are picked up by the banks of streams to make a welcome variety in the diet.

4. *Weirs* (*icansa*, plur. *ifyansa*). *Mono* traps may also be set in weirs made of sticks and reeds placed across the big streams where there is a certain amount of current driving the fish into the traps (*uku milongo* or *ku mukuku*). These weirs include: (*a*) the permanent variety, such as are found on the Chambesi River in November and December; (*b*) semi-permanent weirs built to last for three years or so, or until the sand sifts up by the current; (*c*) temporary weirs built hurriedly to block up the current in a big river for a fish poisoning expedition, in which case traps are used. A much bigger variety of *mono* traps, about eight feet long and three feet in diameter, known as *banasabila* or *mumange* are used.[1] These weirs are in use in November and December until the crocodiles become a menace to the fishers. Thus the season is limited, but the method is very simple, and many of the larger varieties of fish are caught.

226 5. *Nets* (*amasumbu*). In the main body of a river natives catch
[84] fish by nets. Unlike the Bisa, who make about eleven different
227 types of fishing net, the Bemba maintain that they only use one,
286 with the occasional addition of small accessory nets (*ahalenge*). The nets are made of twisted bark rope (*ulushishi*). The maker first digs up the roots of the *lwimbi* bush and hammers these out, removing the internal fibres. These he dries and then damps again, and finally frays off fine threads which are rolled together between finger and thumb into a very thin string. This latter is rolled on to a ball and used with a wooden threader to tat the net.
[435] It is said to take about three months to make a complete net, which is then four feet deep and twenty-five yards long, and sold for about three shillings. Nets are individually owned, and belong to men only.

226 The usual method of net fishing is known as *ukusoa*, the word
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[1] I saw these used on the Luansenshi and Chambesi.

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226 backwaters nets can be set by one method or another practically
227 throughout the year.

Other methods. The Bemba also fish with hooks (*amaloba*) baited with fish and slung on a rope across a big stream, when the waters are low in August, but I never saw this done. Younger men say this method was introduced by the white people since they know that fish hooks are now only to be obtained at European stores. Older fishermen told me that, on the contrary, this type of fishing was practised from the earliest times, and that the Bemba 'always' knew how to make rough iron hooks for the purpose.

A few fish are said to be caught on the Chambesi flats when the floods are falling by means of plaited screens of grass (*ulusangwa*) by which the women cut off small fish from the stream, but, indeed, when the waters are drying up at this season odd fish are caught here and there in all sorts of ways. I have often seen casual passers-by step off a raised pathway through fields flooded to a depth of six inches and catch fish of about ½ lb. to 1 lb. in their hands in the grasses, or else spear them (*ukumela*).

226 To summarize, it can be said that the Bemba who live near the
463 smaller streams of the district are for the most part unskilled
184 fishermen, and rely on the low waters of dried up rivers, and flooded banks to catch a few fish at certain months of the year, but never get sufficient to dry or trade. They have no organized system of exploiting the resources of the rivers or definite leadership in this activity, but catch whatever they can during the breeding season, or before the fish are full grown.[1] In the regular fishing villages, on the other hand, the activity is almost continuous throughout the year. There are four or five different methods of fishing practised, and the men are universally employed in this pursuit. They value their reputation as skilled fishermen and know a considerable amount about the different types of fish caught. Though there is not sufficient fish caught to permit of regular trading, yet it is quite common for a man to be able to pay his 10s. tax by sporadic sales of dried fish.

226 6. *Fishing rights and ceremonies.* Fishing rights, like the rules of
423 use of land, cannot be considered apart from the peoples' beliefs as to the spiritual ownership of food resources. The produce of

[1] How far the people are destroying their supplies of fish by this means does not yet seem clear. Cf. Report on the fish of Lake Bangweulu by C. K. Ricardo and R. J. Jones, December 1936.

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182 769 796 disappear in other villages. In any case they are restricted to the subsidiary crops, and do not affect the staple millet. In some Bantu tribes these sowing rites seem to mark the beginning of the year's new activities and are thus treated as very solemn occasions, but among the Bemba the *ukutema* rites quite overshadow those at the *ukubyala*—the blessing of the seeds.[1] There are no hoeing or fencing rites among the Bemba. Both of these are arduous and important activities, but they depend upon human effort for their success and not upon luck. Harvest, in any agricultural community, is associated with complex emotions. The new food supplies bring delight, gratitude to the giver, and fresh possibilities of social life. The pulse of the village is quickened. Dancing, beer-drinks, and quarrels begin. The filling of the granaries makes the calculation of future needs inevitable, and the careless must be taught the tribal attitude towards the careful storing and handling of food. There may be a justifiable fear that the supplies will not last the rest of the year—an apprehension reflected among the Bemba in the many forms of magic of durability (*icibyalilo*) already described (cf. pp. 206–8). Thus it is not surprising that firstfruit rites in this, as in other Bantu societies, play an important part in the people's economic life and rival the tree-cutting ceremonies in their complexity. We can see from this analysis of the annual cycle how the ritual associated with each successive economic process depends on the nature of the particular activity and on the emotions of pleasure, doubt, or anxiety which are usually aroused by it.

How far the economic ritual of the Bemba actually synchronizes their activities is a question that is harder to answer. Formerly the people used apparently to wait to cut trees, to fire their gardens, or to sow until the chief had prayed for the ancestral spirits' blessings. Now they no longer do so in most commoners' villages, except in the case of the firing of the branches when there is a strong practical reason for their doing so (cf. p. 295). It must be remembered too that gardening is not in any sense a communal activity among the Bemba. The whole village does not work together in the millet gardens, and there would, therefore, be little

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[1] It is interesting to note that among the Bisa of Cilubi Island in the Bangweulu swamps, where tree-cutting has been abandoned, and a more or less fixed system of cultivation adopted, the bush-clearing rites have lapsed, but the sowing ceremonies seem to have gained correspondingly in importance.

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way[1] and prepared by a specialist *panga*, from whom its use may be bought. *Bwanga* is used by the individual to protect himself from hostile forces, such as sorcery. He uses charms to increase the lasting power of the food in his gardens or granary (*icibyahilo*). He occasionally purchases counter-magic if he suspects a sorcerer of bewitching his millet store. Now and then I have seen charms put in gardens as a protection against birds or thieves. But, compared to some of the neighbouring tribes, the Bemba resort to economic magic rarely.[2] It is never used in tribal rites or by the chief in his capacity of priest of the tribe. It can never affect the productivity of the whole land as distinct from the individual garden. All public prayers and ceremonies are addressed to the ancestral spirits, and it is significant that the chief himself is not expected to use charms at all as far as his crops are concerned. 'Why should Citimukulu use *icibyahilo* like a commoner does?' said the official in charge of the chief's gardens. 'Hasn't he prayed to the chiefs of the land to give him food?' This statement seemed to me to be significant.[3]

This preliminary account shows us, I think, how the religious rites of the Bemba must have integrated tribal food production formerly and stimulated hard work. We must now proceed to a more detailed description of the ritual itself and estimate more exactly the part it still plays at the present day.

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The spirit centres. The *imipashi* of the Bemba are approached in certain well-defined ways—calling on the names of the ancestors, usually at the same time spitting in the air (*ukupala mate*); prayers uttered by priests usually at one of the many shrines throughout the territory (*ukulumbula*)—and the offering of some material object such as cloth, flour, beer, chickens, sheep, or cattle to the spirits (*ukupepa*). The spirit centres at which the *imipashi* are invoked can be arranged in the order of their sacredness. They include:

[1] Often with the addition of a metal or part of an animal as an activating principle (*icishimbo*).

[2] The neighbouring Bisa of Cibubi Island, for instance, invariably used protective magic against thefts in their cassava gardens, and Duke describes many of the same kind of charms among the Lamba (*op. cit.*, pp. 234–5). Whether this greater reliance on magic is associated with a less powerful belief in the chief I do not know.

[3] The supernatural functions of some S. African chiefs differ in this respect, since the Zulu, Swazi, and Tschwana chiefs owe much of their power to the possession of rain magic, and many of the S. African chiefs are 'doctored' magically at the beginning of their reign and at subsequent ceremonies.

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769 Mwamba, the second greatest Bemba chief but one, who lives about ten miles from the white centre of Kasama, where his young
796 men go to work. Here I also saw an *ukutema* rite, but only the old men participated. The boys looked derisively on while the chief
[184 made obeisance before his ancestors' shrines, and they only joined
833] the subsequent tree-cutting reluctantly because they were interested by my presence and wanted to have the right to drink the beer provided for the workers on their return. These were youths who despised agriculture as a pursuit fit only for the old, and laughed at everything commonly known as 'the things of the past' (*ifintu fya kale.*) Their conduct distressed the old men exceedingly, and the comments passed with shrugs and in asides were instructive. They showed the complete association in the Bemba mind between the chief's political authority and his power of blessing. If Mwamba had been a 'great chief', the argument ran, he would have been able to control his men. That he was not showed that the spirits did not favour him and that the land had gone 'hard'. It was hardly likely that the royal garden would prosper, therefore, or, of course, the rest of the *icalo*. Elsewhere individuals still
[177] seemed to pray to the *imipashi* before tree-cutting, although some Roman Catholics have begun to cross themselves instead, or as well, but the integrating function of the chief's or headman's ceremony is evidently very much decreased.

372 (*b*) *Firing the gardens.* The firing of the piled branches, the next
769 act of the economic year, is also ritualized, but the ceremonial is not public in any sense, either at the capital or in an ordinary
796 village, and most commoners were unable to give me an account of what happened at the firing of the chief's gardens. In this instance they wait for the *mfumu's* signal to fire their gardens, but not for news of the ceremony performed then. The rite depends on the Bemba belief in the danger of contaminated fire, that is to say, fire that has been touched by any one ceremonially impure. If such fire is considered harmful to the life of a young child, or a chief, and a bar to any approach to the *imipashi*, it is not unnatural that the people should believe it necessary to light their branch
[177] piles with new fire, that is to say, made with fire-sticks or matches. A commoner whom I saw fire his gardens, brought matches, lit a torch of grass, spat into the air, and cried out, 'Now you fire burn well, and let us go in peace.'[1] A headman should purify himself

[1] *We mulilo ulepyafye cisuma! Tuende no mutende!*

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372 and light new fire in his hut before going out to fire his garden,
769 an act for which the other villagers wait, but do not participate in.
796 At the capital the headman of the village (*umwine mushi*), an official with entirely ritual functions and placed in charge of one of the chief's sacred fires, must extinguish his own fire overnight, borrow new fire from a second sacred hearth in the morning, purify himself with the aid of his wife, and go out with a glowing cinder of the royal fire to light the gardens. I never saw this rite carried out at the capital, and its privacy, as in the case of all ceremonial appertaining to the chief's fire, was stressed. The ritualizing of this particular economic process seemed to me to depend on the beliefs in the nature of fire and its sacred properties rather than on anything connected with the agricultural activity itself.

796 (*c*) *Sowing ceremonies.* Among the Bemba sowing ceremonies
769 are insignificant compared to the tree-cutting rites. The staple millet seeds are not blessed at all, although they are doctored usually with the *icibyashilo* magic. Prayers are only offered to the *imipashi* in the case of subsidiary crops, and not by any means for all of these. Pumpkins, cow-peas, Livingstone potatoes, Kaffir corn, maize, and the *amankolobwe* are those usually given as the list.[1] Of course, the ritual may have been fuller in the old days. The Bisa and the Ushi describe a ceremony similar to
[198] those of a number of the Southern Bantu, in which the headman or the chief blesses or doctors handfuls of seeds given him by each of the women of the community, and these specially treated seeds are mixed with the rest to be sown. But among the Bemba I only
769 collected one account of a rite of this sort. The *bakalilo* tell of
796 a sowing ceremony at the Paramount's court following the special
178 tree-cutting rite performed by Mulewa Cimfwembe in the old days (cf. p. 371). They say that after the latter had 'watched the trees of the land', and fire had been set to the royal garden, another hereditary official, the Kamenge, took his place to watch the freshly sown seeds until the ripening of the crop. He also kept sex taboos and lived apart in a grass shelter during this time. This act was known as 'watching the seeds of the chief'. It has evidently not been performed for two reigns at least. Another lost sowing

[1] Compare the list of crops for which the first-fruit rites are performed. It will be seen that Junod's suggestion that such rites remain associated with the older African crops is largely borne out (cf. p. 20), but maize is, of course, a more recent introduction, possibly included as it is sown and also ripens at the same time as most of the others listed above.

2:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1939
FQ5 Bemba FQ5
Bisa

mukulu tried to organize it again in 1933, but hunger forced his wives to eat up the supply of Kaffir corn he had planted for the purpose, and he was never able to collect sufficient grain to make the beer. 769 796 273

(*e*) *Thanksgiving rites.* In Bisa districts a special rite of thanksgiving as distinct from the *ukuposela* is performed in August to September or after the main millet harvest has been reaped. This is known as *ukupelo bwalua kuli mfumu*, 'to give the (dead) chiefs beer'. For instance, near Shiwa Dandu in August 1933 I found special fire-stands (*amafwasa*) had been built in the open near three village spirit shrines especially for the heating of water for this beer. The villagers gathered round the shrines, men one side and women the other, and the headman began to call on the chiefs of the land: 'You, Sir Matipa, Sir Maluma Lubande, you, the owner of the chiefs of the Bisa. You know your companions, all the other chiefs. Call them that they come to drink our beer. We have come to pray for life. Make us go in peace. We have brewed beer. We have brought it to you to honour you. And then we beg for peace. May we eat food! We pray for porridge. May the blood of animals be seen too! Save us from the locusts'—a pause—'Now I have finished.' 769 796 273 184 [778]

After this the wife of the headman poured hot water on the big gourd of beer standing by the spirit hut and she drank, afterwards rolling on the ground in the royal salute 'because she was the owner who brewed the beer' (*ni mwine ualongo bwalua*). She was followed by the rest of the village in order of age,[1] and dancing and singing began round the shrines, each performer rolling on the ground as to a chief.

Such a ceremonial drinking at the spirit shrines may have been much more common in all Bemba villages formerly. I have heard of it happening after a hunt at the nets, and have seen gourd beer-dippers lying in spirit shrines ready for a beer drink. But in this Bisa district, harvest ceremonies of this kind are performed to this day, and they are followed in some cases by a ritual hunt to discover the will of the spirits.

All such harvest or first-fruit rites must be considered as a means of sacralizing the gathering of the new harvest, encouraging the community to handle the essential food supplies with reverence, or emphasizing, as Radcliffe-Browne would say, its 'social 769 796

[1] Except the headmen, who may only drink in the village.

2:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1939
FQ5 Bemba FQ5

present tendency of building smaller and smaller settlements lessens the labour force in this way.

The economic leadership in the village, in so far as it exists, is in the hands of the headman. He directs joint enterprises, decides when the village should be moved, and chooses the new site in co-operation with the other elders. He is in charge of the communal rites, settles minor disputes between the villagers, and represents his people at the chief's court or the District Commissioner's office. He is responsible for the collecting of tribute, providing *umulasa* labour, and for any administrative duties the Government may charge him with, such as the catching of tax defaulters, &c. But there is no doubt that most of the Bemba headman's authority is derived from his position as head of a kinship group, and that he is respected as the grandfather, father-in-law, or maternal uncle of most of the inhabitants, as well as by virtue of his political status (cf. Chap. VII). Thus the power of a headman of an old-fashioned type of community, and in particular those of the *bakabilo*, is in striking contrast to the wavering authority exerted by those ruling over a modern village not definitely composed on kinship lines. For instance, Citikafula, one of Citimukulu's chief *bakabilo*, was headman of a village composed as follows:[1] 25 men, of whom 14 were close personal relatives of the headman (2 brothers, 4 sons, 3 grandsons, 4 maternal nephews, 1 cross-cousin), while the remaining members of the community had come from other villages to marry women at Citikafula's. There were 35 women, of whom 27 were near relatives of the headman (3 wives, 7 daughters, 6 grand-daughters, 6 sisters, 3 maternal nieces, 1 grandmother, and 1 mother-in-law). Hence nearly 75 per cent. of the men and women were members of the headman's own lineage group. In such a village he was able to get large gardens made for him by his younger relatives, strode about the settlement scolding householders with untidy huts, and organized the garden work by constant criticism and encouragement. Whereas Bwembya, a man of equal personality and a member of the royal clan, was headman of a village four miles from Kasama, that is to say, almost within a white township. His community was composed as follows: 52 men, of whom 5 were close relatives only (i.e. father, 1 brother, 1 maternal nephew, 1 brother-in-law, and 1 grandson), and 108 women, of whom 8 were near relatives (1 daughter, 2

[1] Using the kinship terms in their classificatory sense.

2:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1939
FQ5 Bemba FQ5

grand-daughters, 2 sisters, 2 maternal nieces, and 1 sister-in-law); 8 per cent. of the inhabitants only were thus closely related to the headman, and 10 men were actually members of quite different tribes.[1] Thirty out of the 52 men had joined the village with the express purpose of finding work with the Europeans at Kasama and not on kinship grounds at all. In a community of this type Bwembya evidently found it impossible to control the activities of his people, and they gave him little economic help in spite of his royal rank. It is often stated that young men lose respect for tribal authorities after working in the mines, and this is largely true, but it must also be borne in mind that the tribal authorities are in charge of groups of quite different composition from those of old days, and they are asked to perform different functions of leadership.

(c) *The chief's leadership in economic enterprises.* There are two aspects of the chief's functions as an organizer of labour. In the first place, there are a number of activities he actually initiates and co-ordinates, and in the second, his direction of his own labour force and his accumulation of stores in the capital, sets the pace for agricultural enterprise and forms the basis of the whole economic system of the tribe.

We have seen that the chief actually sets the time for the firing of the gardens, and that the performance of economic rites still to some extent gives the signal for tree-cutting and sowing. The knowledge that big gardens are being made at the capital, acts, as I tried to show, as a stimulus to the undertaking of further work.[2]

Besides, it is difficult to realize, without living at the capital for some time, the extent to which the *mfumu* directs agricultural enterprises by advising or criticizing both the members of his own big village and those of his *icalo*. Ultimately chiefs want food produced in their district, because they then get plenty of tribute. They express this fact quite frankly. A severe shortage also, as I indicated, reflects on their supernatural powers, makes people begin to grumble, and even in time threaten to leave.[3] From all points of view, therefore, it is to the chief's advantage that the people should cultivate efficiently. Their knowledge of cultivating processes, soil selection, and the best moment for planting is also

[1] Note the proportion of men to women in these villages: i.e. 23:33 and 52:108 respectively.

[2] Cf. p. 371.

[3] *e.g.* the charges made all over the country against Citimukulu during the recent locust epidemic for failure to perform his ritual duties properly.

3: Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1956
FQ5 Bemba FQ5

The Interpretation of the Ceremony

admonition, as in the ceremony of *ukushikula* after marriage or the installation of a new chief or chieftainess. The same words are used for all these constituent ritual acts, and it would be difficult for a passer-by to distinguish one rite from another.

This fact surely accounts for the importance of the chisungu rite in Bemba culture. It is the occasion on which the girl is given her fire and her marriage pot and made responsible for their care and their use. On her handling of the hearth depends her husband's power of access to his ancestral spirits or, if she be married to a headman or chief, the blessings which are available for gardens, bush and village, political life and warfare. A glance at the chart will show that except for individual magic rites, there are no ceremonies in the last column which do not, in the last resource, depend on the chisungu or on the abbreviated forms of puberty ceremony now carried out instead. The supernatural powers of the Citimukulu and his brother chiefs are directly pivoted on the chisungu and its magic and didactic acts; this purely feminine rite is therefore essential to the welfare of the whole tribe.[1]

The chisungu can also be considered of importance to the maintenance of tribal traditions, because of its direct emphasis on 'things handed down'. The *mbusa* are referred to specifically in this way and this is said to be their value. The central act of an economic rite is a prayer and supplication to the ancestors when the officiant asks for what is wanted, blessings on the seeds for instance, or peace. He asks for them from beings who will not always grant these requests. The words are uttered spontaneously and the sentences have no very fixed form. They mention individual ancestors by name, vary the terms of address, and add a number of immediate and special requests as well as the more usual demands for blessings and fertility. For instance a headman offering the first fruits to the ancestor was heard to add at the end of his discourse a fervent appeal that I might not miss when I went out shooting, as I had on the previous day.

The defined elements here are the time and method of approach to the ancestors and the status and position of the officiant. With

[1] This suggests a hypothesis for comparative research. If my interpretation of the importance of the chisungu is correct a similar emphasis on instruction and care in handling fire will be found wherever the chief's supernatural power is thought to be closely linked to it. This question will be discussed.

3: Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1956
FQ5 Bemba FQ5

these conditions fixed there is a wide range of possible wants that can be voiced, meeting the need of the moment or of the group or the person concerned. These are rites of supplication in which the Bemba voice their needs and try to persuade themselves that they will be fulfilled.

In the chisungu however the women do not voice new desires, but always those that have existed in the past. The rites consist of an intricate succession of acts the value of which lies in more or less exact repetition. The *mbusa* must be made in the same way and the pottery models on the floor cannot be altered. These are rites which represent and proclaim the established rather than ones which enable the performers to meet new needs. The mimes and emblems of these initiation rites form a charter for the transfer of roles that have to be constantly assumed in each generation. They do not grant the men or women who perform them any help in the present troubles of Bemba married life, such as the prolonged absence of men from the tribal areas or the growing divorce rate. There is no element in them of supplication or prayer. It is for this reason that the chisungu must be reckoned as a rite of maintenance of tribal traditions.

To turn again to the chart it will be seen that all the major rituals of the Bemba reflect the importance they attach to fertility and the supply of food. The chisungu is more closely concerned with fertility than rites of supplication performed by chiefs, yet I never heard a prayer uttered by a chief which did not contain a special appeal to the ancestors for parenthood (*bufyashi*). The cycle of agricultural ceremonies is one of the most important tasks the chiefs are responsible for. The links between the three sets of rites are here close.

It is not easy to account for the tremendous emphasis on fertility and the care of children in Bemba culture. The desire is likely to be strong in all societies where social structure is largely based on descent and groups can only be enlarged by the birth of new children. There are, however, many African tribes with similar social structures in which the emphasis on fertility does not seem to be ritualised in this pronounced way. But it must be remembered that in Bemba culture the lack of any permanent form of possessions makes rights over labour—here rights over the

MAIN FEATURES OF THE ECONOMY AND MATERIAL CULTURE

AGRICULTURE

241 Three main crops are grown in the area but only one of these, finger millet, is a universal staple: it is well suited to a highland climate and to rainy summers. Of the other two, Kaffir corn (*Sorghum Vulgare*) seems to be of decreasing importance, though it is still the crop of chief ritual significance. It requires a good soil and more labour, particularly in the protection of the crop from the ravages of birds. The remaining crop, cassava, seems to have been introduced into the area from the Congo and its use is still spreading eastwards. It is a staple in some areas, particularly in the Lake area. It makes a lighter but less sustaining flour than millet and is poorer in fats - which are deficient generally in the diet. Maize is grown as a subsidiary crop. Besides these, groundnuts, beans, edible gourds, pumpkins, cucumbers and cowpeas are planted.

241 184 The method of cultivation common in the area is known as the *citemene* system. The word comes from *ukuteme* "to cut". It describes the common practice in this part of North-eastern Rhodesia of pollarding trees and piling the lopped branches in small circular patches which are then fired to form an ash bed in which the seeds are sown. This practice, also known as "slash and burn", is commonly held to be typical of, and to have originated with, the Bemba, but there is some evidence that it was borrowed from the tribes they found in the area; it is, in fact, almost identical with that found among the Lungu and some Maniwe-speaking groups. The Bemba themselves say that in Luba-land they were formerly hoe-cultivators and learnt the *citemene* practice from the peoples with whom they made contact on their arrival. The system differs from that practised further south among the Lamba-Lala groups, where almost no rotation of crops is carried out and the area cleared, besides being larger, is made into a number of small garden-patches. Trapnell distinguishes the Bemba practice as the Northern *citemene* system and that of the Lamba-Lala group as the Southern *citemene*.

This 'Northern' method involves the preparation, for the sowing of finger millet, of a single circular garden from a clearing in the woodlands. The proportion of pollarding required to provide the ash for a garden is estimated, for the more thickly wooded country, to be about 6½ times the size of garden required and about 10 times the size of that needed in the poorer woodlands.

Land selection is largely dictated by the growth of trees as a source of branches for burning for millet-gardens. There is a certain preference for old forest land. The cutting is carried out around May. The Bemba are noted for their custom of climbing recklessly to the top of the trees and lopping off the branches. Smaller trees tend to be cut off waist high, a practice widely carried out by the Bisa and Lala as well as by the Maniwe and Lungu.

The fallen branches are systematically stacked with the thicker ends toward the centre and the piles are fired together, traditionally by a signal that the chief's garden has been lit. This takes place some time between the end of September and the middle of November. The area is now

covered by a blanket of fine ash and is called *bukula*, a garden. Subsequently this garden is fenced and the cleared ground beyond the fence remains uncultivated. While, apart from the wood ash, the Bemba do not deliberately use manure or decaying organic matter for its restorative powers as do the Mambwe, they do recognize that gardens on old village sites tend to be more fertile. The ash covering on the garden does a good deal to counteract the acid in the soil and makes further weeding unnecessary. While this system of clearing annually large areas of bush has frequently been condemned as wasteful, no more satisfactory method of woodland cultivation has yet been evolved.

Millet is sown when the ground is soft after the first rains. Kaffir corn and cassava are sometimes sown immediately before the millet. In succeeding years other crops will be grown in an old millet-garden but a new millet-garden is made annually.

The elaborate nature of the system lies in the extent to which rotation, or at any rate the alternation of crops in a four to seven years' cycle, has been developed. Throughout the central and north-western districts a simple rotation of millet-groundnuts-beans is practised, but in the Kasama district a more elaborate system is found - possibly owing to contact with Iwa and Inamwanga groups to the north where such rotations are even more developed. Here the millet-groundnut sequence is followed by either beans on mounds and Kaffir corn or Kaffir corn on mounds and beans.(1)

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Variations on the *citemene* system are found, corresponding with local variations in physical conditions, and a few are considered below:

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1. *Aushi, Chishinga, Mukulu, Ngumbu, Kawendi*

On the plateau between Fort Rosebery and Kawambwa, occupied by Aushi, Chishinga and adjoining sections of Mukulu and Ngumbu, a form of *citemene* cultivation is found with cassava as a joint staple or staple crop. This seems to be a hybrid system representing a fusion between the millet-culture and a more recent cassava-culture from the Congo. Since millet is here grown chiefly for beer, cassava is the real staple, forming an important crop in the *citemene* and a main crop in the village gardens. Groundnuts play an important part in both gardens, and annual Kaffir corn is also found. Beans are less common and are not found among the southern Aushi.

Among the first four groups listed above, clearing of gardens may be done by lopping, favoured by the Aushi, or breast high cutting, favoured by the Chishinga. Millet is followed by mounded groundnuts, around which beans are planted among the Chishinga and Kaffir corn among the Aushi. Maize, gourds and pumpkins are planted as catch crops. Gardens may be abandoned after the second year, but Aushi, Ngumbu and Chishinga tend to mound beans in the third or fourth year. Village gardens are found throughout the area and here cassava is the main crop and groundnuts grown on mounds are more common than beans. Separate Kaffir corn gardens are found in the south among the Kawendi and Aushi.

(1) Richards quotes a ten-year sequence of crops in Bemba country near Kasama. 6, 1939, p.318.

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The Mukulu on the northern lake shore plant groundnuts in *citemene* gardens in the second year, as do the Bemba, and the Ngumbu and Kawendi in the Lake Basin grow millet in such *chipya* thickets as survive, alternating with cassava. Where thickets no longer exist, as on Chishi Island, the ground is broken by cassava mounds and then millet is planted. Some maize, gourds, cucumbers and pineapples are found near villages. Along the Luapula among the Chishinga a more prosperous form of agriculture is found, in which groundnuts predominate with cassava and millet is relatively unimportant.

2. *Bisa*

Among the Bisa to the north-east of the Lake, the *citemene* garden is planted with cassava either alone or as a joint staple with millet. Gardens are cleared by lopping, commonly every third year or less, and catch crops - gourds, pumpkins, maize - are planted with the cassava. Groundnuts are planted on the flat in the second year. Early millet gardens are not found. Rice is cultivated and the gardens prepared by the *citemene* method, the rice being broadcast as though it were millet. Village gardens, for the cultivation of root crops and pulses, are found throughout the area. Among Bisa living on islands in Lake Bangweulu, thicket cultivation is practised by burning the thicket *in situ* and owing millet which is followed by cassava on mounds. Gourds, pumpkins and maize are also planted.

3. *Shila, Bwile, Tabwa*

In the southern parts of the area occupied by these groups, clearings are made by cutting trees at breast height and the gardens are sown with millet and catch crops. Subsequently the ground may be used for mounded groundnuts or millet and groundnuts or millet alone. In the Luapula basin and Lake Mweru area, millet is little cultivated and is restricted to small *citemene* clearings. The main gardens are planted with cassava and groundnuts. Kaffir corn is locally grown by the Bwile and among these people and the Shila rice is cultivated with the hoe. Very variable types of crops are found in the village gardens.

It is noteworthy that among the groups living in this latter area the value of rotted grass as manure is clearly recognized.

The dense thicket country north-east of Lake Mweru supports a distinct system, practised by the Tabwa. Finger millet is the staple crop and is sown in burnt gardens but the circular clearing, catch crops and crop sequence are absent. The clearing is roughly rectangular, the brushwood is burnt *in situ* and the main crop is grown for several consecutive years. With such limited variety in the crops cultivated, the village gardens play an important part in supplying root crops. Cassava is grown on separate parts of the garden. Rice is grown locally.

4. *Unga*

The Unga may be divided agriculturally into two groups: those living in the central raised swamp land of the Lunga plain and those living at the more southern end of the swamp on sandbanks and ant-hills.

The former make millet gardens on such land as is clear of water and subsequently plant mounded cassava. Such a two-year sequence may be continued for several years, but many groups abandon cultivation after the first two years. Village gardens are also planted with cassava, and bananas and pineapples are grown. In such gardens, made on low sandbanks denuded of soil by years of cultivation, cassava seldom grows to full maturity owing to the hunger of the cultivators. Some people make an annual migration to the Lunga plain to plant millet, others barter fish for meal. Very little in the way of subsidiary crops is found beyond a little Kaffir corn, some beans and sweet potatoes. In the territory of Chief Kasoma(1) the people make a mass migration to cultivable areas in the dry season, June to November.

The *Twa* cultivate little, relying mainly on their fishing with which they get meal by trading. A certain amount of cassava cultivation is found here and there.

HUNTING AND FISHING

While every Bemba is a hunter by inclination, present shortage of game prevents this desire from being fully gratified. While Melland(2) records the existence of organized hunters' guilds and specialized hunters among the Kaonde these do not at present exist among the Bemba, although elephant hunters formerly were specialists. Hunting by traps and pits is neither an organized nor a specialized activity. Net hunting demands communal effort and is often carried out as a form of divination. There is little information on the hunting activities of the other groups; among the swamp peoples (Unga, Twa, Bisa) hunting is subordinated to fishing but the meat of a certain antelope (*lechwe*) was greatly in demand and these animals were hunted so persistently that a protection law has only prevented, recently, their extinction. There was a certain amount of trade in *lechwe* skins worked in designs.

Fishing is not a major activity, though fish is greatly appreciated as a relish and caught whenever possible. There is no regular trade in fish, nor is fishing a whole-time occupation except for certain groups living on the banks of the larger rivers, where there are definite fishing villages with permanent sites where fishing is carried on all the year round, and there is quite a complex system of pond and weir ownership.

Fish are caught by three chief methods: by poisoning, by weirs and by nets. Poisoning is a communal and unskilled activity carried out at the end of the dry season (August-November). Weirs are only in use in November and December before the crocodiles become a menace. Only one type of net is used, a rectangular variety, stretched across the river, at the beginning and end of the dry season.

It is among the swamp peoples, however - the Unga, Twa and, to a lesser extent, the Bisa - that fishing attains greatest importance. Here the land resources are so depleted, by the over-cultivation of areas which are diminishing in size through increasing inundation, that the growing population

(1) Brelsford, S, 1946. (2) Melland, 1923.

matrilineage is, in the case of commoners, merely a unit of succession; in the case of members of the royal dynasty it is the unit which provides for the succession of chieftainships. 613

MARRIAGE

Uxorilocal residence, at any rate during the early years of married life, is characteristic of this group of peoples. Large payments in money or goods are not made at marriage, but the bridegroom, formerly at least, gave service to his parents-in-law for a number of years and sometimes remains permanently a member of the village in which his wife was born. Among the Bemba, for instance, it is the common practice for a young man to give a small betrothal present (*nsalamo*) to his fiancée's parents. He then moves to her village and builds a house there. Young girls were often engaged in this way before puberty, and performed small services for their husbands, such as sweeping the hut, drawing water or even sleeping in the same bed with them. At puberty they were removed from their husbands' huts until the *cisungu* (girls' puberty rite) had been performed and a marriage ceremony with the ritual consummation of the union took place. When she was first married, a girl had no right to a fire-place of her own, but shared in the cooking with her mother and married sisters. Later she acquired her own fire-place, granary and garden. After two or more children had been born, and the son-in-law had won the confidence of his parents-in-law, he was allowed to remove his bride to his own village or to some other village of his choosing. The rate of conversion of such marriages is not known amongst the Bemba, although Richards states that she believes that it was higher in this area than among the Bisa.(1) Figures for the Lamba, who practise a similar type of marriage, are given on p.59. 591 583 [881] [851]

Characteristic of the Bemba marriage contract is the importance attached to the series of ceremonial presentations of food by the mother-in-law to her son-in-law, which gradually make him "free" to eat the different staple foods, and the final ceremony known as the *kuingishuya* or "the entering in of the son-in-law", which takes place after the children have been born and the marriage is established and which puts an end finally to the tabooed relationship between a man and his wife's people. The ceremonial marking of the different stages in the establishment of a permanent marriage relationship was sometimes concluded in the old days by a second marriage ceremony known as the *bunga*. This was a gesture of respect which a man of substance offered to his wife and her people in the case of a marriage which had been long established with a woman to whom the husband was particularly devoted. At the *bunga* marriage, which has also been described for the Bisa, more goods were transferred than in the case of the first marriage, and it is specifically stated to have been a display of wealth.(2) 583

Among the Unga, marriage procedures seem to be much more casual, there being no service by the son-in-law. Brelsford suggests that the marriage payment serves simply to confirm the fact that intercourse between the couple has already started and that the marriage is a fact.(3) The Bemba hold such arrangements in contempt. 583 184

(1) Richards, A, 1950.
(2) Richards, A, 1940.
(3) Brelsford, 1, 1946, p.108.

territories generally in the capacity of sub-chiefs. Subject chiefs of alien stock, generally of Bisa origin, also hold some chieftainships particularly in the west.

Cases of disputed succession were decided by a meeting composed of members of the royal family and the *bakabilo* or hereditary councillors. Disputed successions and feuds between one chief and another were common in the old days.

The succession to Bisa chieftainships also goes from brother to brother and then to sister's son or sister's daughter's son, but the Bisa never reached the same degree of centralisation; they live in more scattered groups and, before the arrival of the Europeans, had no Paramount Chief. Little is known of the political structure of the Aushi and the Unga, but they have certainly not achieved a centralised government, and some of the smaller Aushi chiefs are living on tiny islands in the Bangweulu swamps.

THE MACHINERY OF CENTRALIZATION

The Bemba can be reckoned as a more or less centralized State in that its major chiefdoms are controlled by members of one royal family; its Paramount Chief had the command of the army and has the supreme control of supernatural power, the possession of the most sacred of the tribal relics and the right of appointment to lesser chiefdoms. He also provides the final judicial court of appeal.

The Paramount Chief and some of the biggest territorial chiefs have attached to them a group of hereditary officials who combine ritual with political and judicial functions. In the case of the Paramount Chief these officials, the *bakabilo*, number between 35 and 40 and form an advisory council on special matters of state. They include the hereditary officials in charge of the chief's relics (*babeny*), the royal buriers and embalmers (*bafingo*) and a number of other officials carrying out special ritual functions in connection with the ceremonial of kingship. These *bakabilo* are in a very powerful position. They are hereditary heads of villages near the capital; they are immune from giving tribute to the chief; they used to wear special head-dresses; they must keep the same sex-taboos as the chief, and are buried in the central district under his control. The real *bakabilo* are those connected with the Paramount's court. They are in fact called "the *Babemba*". The *bakabilo* of the *citimukulu* bury all the major chiefs and they act as regents at the death of the Paramount; any matter of tribal importance, such as a succession dispute, is placed before them. They check the power of the Paramount, since they can, and sometimes do, refuse to perform the ritual on which he depends for the exercise of his power. Being hereditary officials with lines of descent as old as that of the Paramount Chief himself they cannot be removed at will. They form a central tribal council but not a public assembly such as the *pitso* of the Sotho-speaking peoples.

Each chief has certain executive officials to support him. These include the *bafilolo* or heads of the divisions of a capital, who maintain peace in the royal village, organise tribute labour and allocate land for cultivation. They are appointed from among the chief's own favourites and supporters. Each big chief had formerly a number of captains or *bashika* of whom some were hereditary and most were appointed at the chief's will.

5:Slaski E-4 (no date) 1950 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

Luapula Peoples

Tabwa (Aitawa), Lungu, Bemba, and Aushi (including their off-shoots the Kawendi and Mukulo). In addition there are Bwile (Bwiri), Mambwe, Bisa, Ngumbo, Mukulu, Lala, Lamba, Lomotwa, Yeke (Nyamwezi) and Swahili elements. The presence of the Batembo pygmies, whom Maes and Boone(1) place just south of Lake Mweru on their tribal map of the region, is not confirmed by other authorities. The extent of tribal mixture is shown by the fact that the headmen of thirty-four villages in Kambwali's chiefdom belong to eleven different tribes. None of the tribes is indigenous to the valley.

The tribe, *mutundu* (pl. *mitundu*: the word is also used for a species of animal, bird or tree) or *mushyobo*, is not a descent group. Tribal allegiance, unlike clan affiliation, can be changed with residence. Though never in doubt about their clan, people may be uncertain as to their tribe. Inter-tribal differences in custom were never considerable. Neither physical type, form of settlement, nor language are now reliable indications of tribal origin. Certain characteristics are traditionally attributed to particular tribes: the Bemba are proverbially cruel, the Shila good fishermen and canoe-makers; the Tabwa are renowned as witches and for the beauty of their women,(2) the Lomotwa for their quarrelsomeness. In spite of territorial dispersion, members of a tribe consider themselves *lupwa luno*, "of one stock". The chiefs of neighbouring tribes occasionally visit their former subjects established in Kazembe's country.

The Lunda possessed a special status and constituted a sort of nobility to which distinguished outsiders - non-Lunda chiefs and headmen - could be admitted by being invested with Lundahood (*ubulunda*).

DEMOGRAPHY

No estimates are available for the population in the valley on the western (Belgian Congo) side. On the eastern side in Northern Rhodesia it was estimated by Coxhead at 32,000 in 1914.(3) He made no attempt, however, to distinguish between the various tribal groups, referring to all the subjects of the Kazembe as "the Lunda". According to more recent estimates the eastern population approaches 50,000 and shows signs of rapid expansion. It is now concentrated in some 300 villages strewn along the Luapula by the trunk road built on the hard land next to the riverside swamps. No figures are available to indicate variations in the density of population, which must be very high locally as many of the villages adjoin one another forming a continuous row of habitations along the side of the road.

Except for missionaries there are no resident Europeans in Kazembe's kingdom. On Nkuba's side a group of colonial officials and traders live at Kasenga.

Mobility has always been high and numbers have fluctuated widely as a result of migrations due to wars and to the popularity of individual chiefs.(4) A large proportion of the population is said to have left the country during the reign of Keleka, the fourth Kazembe, remembered for his atrocities.(5)

(1) Maes and Boone, 1935, p.135.
(2) Livingstone, 1874, I, p.259.
(3) Coxhead, 1914, p.64.
(4) Livingstone, op.cit., p.254.
(5) Livingstone, op.cit., p.265.

614 associated the duty of burying the chief of the
616 new arrivals, usually the conquering group.
173 This fact is mentioned in a number of legends of the immigration of the Bemba and kindred tribes. The first Citimukulu, or Paramount Chief, is said to have died on the march and was buried by an old man, a member of the millet clan, whom he found in possession of a grove of trees there. A member of the millet clan is still
614 appointed as the *Shimwaluke*, or hereditary
616 burier, of the principal chiefs of the Bemba
767 to-day, and he is still responsible for the final and most powerful rain ceremony, when the prayers of the Paramount himself have failed. The mortuary ritual of the Bemba chiefs is so complex, and there are so many hereditary officials responsible for it, that the millet clan are never described simply as the *banungwe* of the royal crocodile clan, but among the kindred Bisa tribes living in smaller groups near L. Bangweolu, we find to-day the hereditary burier of the chief always drawn from one clan and always responsible for the annual prayers for the fertility of the land, his clan definitely described as the first occupiers of the territory, and moreover as the *banungwe* of the royal clan. Thus Chief Matipa on Cilubi Island is buried by the head of the Wild Pig clan (*ngulube*) who are *banungwe* of the royal clan of that island, which is the tree clan (*ngoma*), the descendents of conquering immigrants who arrived about a century ago. This hereditary burier is in charge of the sowing and first-fruit ceremonies in this island and not the chief.

614 This seems to me to throw light on the original
616 pairing of opposite clans. From the same area
173 comes a legend of the successive settlement of two groups which suggest a possible reason why preferential marriage rights should be associated
●184 with reciprocal burial duties, or at any rate embodies the traditional native explanation of the custom. The Bisa, living under Chief Nsamba in the L. Bangweolu district say the *Bena Nkushi* (woman's clan), came up the river first to their island. Then the *Bena Mfula* (rain clan) came in canoes. They ate with the *Bena Nkushi* and started to move off. But the head of the local group said, 'Stay here. We are alone here. We 'have no women here. Let us live together.' And the newcomers agreed. So the rain clain gave the sister of their chief in marriage to the head of the woman's clan. When the latter died he had no heirs of his own to bury him, so members of the rain clan buried him. Later another

[p. 192(B)]

614 group of immigrants arrived, the *Bena Nyama*
616 (tree clan, that of the present Bisa chiefs of the
district). They found the rain clan in possession,
●184 and begged them to pray to the spirits of the
173 land 'since they were the owners of the land'
and to bury their chiefs. The story ends, 'So
' the rain clan are the priests (*shimizapepo*) here
' to-day. They are the *Bewanpwe* of the woman
' clan.' They took their wives from them. They
' are also the *bewanpwe* of the tree clan.'

614 It is impossible to speak with certainty as to
616 the origin of the *Bewanpwe* relationship, but
these living traditions as to the ritual inter-
dependence and marriage exchanges of pairs of
matrilineal lineage groups settled in one locality
in the early days of the occupation of the country
seem to throw out clues. Once the clan names,
usually bestowed as we have seen, from some
legend as to the split or amalgamation of two
local groups, became linked in traditional lin-
guistic forms (praise-names, ceremonial utterances,
formalised jokes, etc.), as complementary or
hostile, the extension of the *bewanpwe* concept
to the classification of other clan objects would
follow readily. I have no evidence that this
process took place in the past, but I have seen
614 it occurring to-day. A native, asked the *bewanpwe*
616 of such and such a clan, gives one or two pairs
811 automatically, and these are invariably among
the oldest clans, with well-known legends of
origin and local centres. Then he stops to think
and adds more names, and then proceeds to
argue with himself, for instance, that if iron is

[p. 193(A)]